

Message Text

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20

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-13

SAJ-01 ACDA-19 NIC-01 RSR-01 /129 W

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R 240900Z JUL 73

FM USMISSION BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2124

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

CINCEUR FOR POLAD AND OPS

CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD AND OPS AND AEAGG-OCO

CINCUSAFE FOR POLAD AND OPS

USELMLO

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E.O. 11652: NKXA

TAGS: PGOV, WB, GE

SUBJECT: GDR CLAIMS TO RELEASE WOULD-BE ESCAPEE

REF: BERLIN 1249

1. AT 1500 LOCAL JULY 21, EAST BERLIN POLICE RELEASED THROUGH CHAUSEESTRASSE BORDER CROSSING POINT AN EIGHTEEN YEAR-OLD EAST BERLINER, IDENTIFIED AS KLAUS GOMERT. EAST GERMAN NEWS AGENCY ADN JULY 22 CLAIMED GOMERT WAS PERSON WHO FAILED IN ATTEMPT TO SCALE WALL NIGHT JULY 20 IN VICINTY LUDWIG-JAHN SPORT PARK (REFTEL). ADN EMPHASIZED GOMERT'S EXPULSION WAS NOT A PRECEDENT BUT WAS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO GIVE LIE TO CURRENT "SLANDER CAMPAIGN" BY WESTERN MEDIA AGAINST ALLEGED GDR BRUTALITY AT WALL. ADN CHARACTERIZED GOMERT AS PETTY CRIMINAL, CONVICTED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS OF THEFT AND PASSING STOLEN PROPERTY. PRIOR TO HIS RELEASE, GOMERT AS WELL AS ALLEGED VICTIM OF SHOOTING INCIDENT JULY 8 (BERLIN 1153) WERE PRODUCED ON EAST GERMAN TV IN DRAMATIC ATTEMPT TO

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REINFORCE ADN PROPAGANDA LINE.

2. INTERVIEWED BY WESTERN NEWSMAN IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS RELEASE, GOMERT SAID HE HAD INDEED ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE BUT AT ABOUT 2200 LOCAL THE PREVIOUS EVENING, NOT AFTER MIDNIGHT, WHEN REFTEL INCIDENT TOOK PLACE. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN STOPPED BY WARNING SHOTS FIRED OVER HIS HEAD, BUT DENIED HE HAD BEEN PHOTOGRAPHED AT ANY TIME BY EAST BERLIN BORDER GUARDS OR HAD LAID ON GROUND FOR OVER HOUR, AS EARLIER REPORTED BY WEST BERLIN OBSERVERS. GOMERT ALSO DENIED ADN CHARGES OF PREVIOUS CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS, MAINTAINING THAT HIS ONLY JAIL SENTENCE WAS FOR PHYSICALLY ATTACKING HIS-STEP-FATHER. WEST BERLIN POLICE REPORTED GOMERT WAS INTOXICATED AT TIME OF HIS ESCAPE ATTEMPT.

3. SENAT SPOKESMAN IN COMMENTING ON GOMERT RELEASE SAID THAT GDR AUTHORITIES HAD STAGED A "DEPLORABLE GAME" WITH A HUMAN BEING. HE WONDERED WHETHER THIS "UNUSAL PROCEDURE" WOULD CONTINUE TO BE USED IN CASES OF PERSON WISHING TO GO TO WEST. AFTER FURTHER INVESTIGATION JULY 23, WEST BERLIN POLICE WIDENED HOLSE IN ADN STORY AND CHALLENGED EAST GERMANS TO PRODUCE PHOTOS THEY WERE OBSERVED TO TAKE NIGHT JULY 20.

4. COMMENT: SENAT OFFICIALS HAD PREVIOUSLY SPECULATED, WITHOUT MUCH EVIDENCE TO GO ON, THAT ONE OR BOTH OF RECENT WALL INCIDENTS MAY HAVE BEEN STAGED BY GDR AS WARNING TO ANY WOULD-BE ESCAPEES ATTENDING WYF. GOMERT AFFAIR SUGGESTS THAT, TO THE CONTRARY, EAST GERMANS WERE EMBARRASSED BY SUCCESSIVE WALL INCIDENTS ON EVE OF WYF AND ATTEMPTED TO PUT ON BETTER PUBLIC FACE. CONSIDERING CLUMSY MANAGEMENT OF GOMERT'S RESURRECTION IT IS UNLIKELY THEY HAVE HAD MUCH SUCESS.

5. USCOB CONCURS.BORG

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